



# Parenting in Times of War

Dear Parents,

I'm writing to you during a challenging time. I've written before about terror attacks but now we are living in unprecedented times. We are in the midst of a war and there are many unknowns. When will schools go back to their regular schedule? When will life go back to normal? How long will this war last? During periods of great uncertainty there are some key points to keep in mind which can help lower anxieties.

Firstly, when you feel overwhelmed, try to focus on where you are at the moment and what you are currently doing. Practice mindfulness techniques such as taking slow, deep breaths and feeling your feet planted on solid ground. If you are not in imminent danger, remind yourself that you are safe right now. Think about all the things that you may be grateful for at the moment, such as having food, family, friends or your health. Much of the anxiety is caused by the brain racing ahead thinking of all possible future scenarios. This kind of circular thinking creates confusion and heightens anxiety.

Another tip is to do something that you find enjoyable and that helps you calm down like drinking a hot cup of tea/coffee, eating a snack, taking a bath/ shower, or reading a book. Listening to music,

creating art and journaling are more ways to relax and keep yourself occupied. Whatever activity has helped you calm down in the past, will probably help you now too. Going for a walk, dancing or exercising can also be effective in reducing stress.

Once your body is calm, you can think more clearly and focus on whatever task lay at hand. Always bring yourself back to the here and now. Avoid watching too much news and instead fortify yourself with positive forms of chizuk whether it's learning, watching something entertaining or talking to friends and family. Connecting to your community and surrounding yourself with supportive friends will help you stay strong. While so many things are beyond our control right now, try to focus on what you do have control over. There are so many places to volunteer and offer your services. Staying busy and productive will give you a sense of empowerment.

As this situation continues, it's important to realize that our children are looking to see how we're managing. Children are greatly affected by how their parents cope and behave. They take cues from the adults in their lives. As long as parents stay strong and stable, children will feel safe and secure. This doesn't mean that a parent can never cry or feel sad or overwhelmed. These are

valid feelings especially during times of war. Everyone has ups and downs, parents as well as children. It's important to speak openly about these feelings, validate them and make space for them. We just don't want to get stuck there. Parents should aim to maintain a general sense of balance and faith.

These skills and goals such as stress relief techniques, keeping busy and feeling purposeful can be imparted to children as well. Parents who take care of themselves, by finding the right supports and outlets are prioritizing the health and stability of their homes.

May we hear good news! ■

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In view of the current situation,  
The Weekly Podcast

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by

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**תפילה לשלום מדינת ישראל**  
אֲבִינוּ שְׁבַשְׁמִים, צוּר יִשְׂרָאֵל,  
וּגְאֻלָּו, בְּרַךְ אֶת-מְדִינַת-יִשְׂרָאֵל,  
רֹאשִׁית צְמִיחַת גְּאֻלָּתָנוּ. הֲגֵן  
עָלֶיהָ בְּאַבְרַת חֶסֶדְךָ וּפְרֹשׁ עָלֶיהָ  
סֶכֶת שְׁלוֹמְךָ וּשְׁלַח אוֹרְךָ וְאַמְתֵּךְ  
לְרֹאשִׁיָּהּ, שְׂרִיָּה וְיוֹעֲצִיָּה, וְתִקְנֵם  
בְּעֶצֶה טוֹבָה מִלְּפָנֶיךָ. חֲזֵק אֶת  
יְדֵי מַגְנֵי אֶרֶץ קְדֻשָּׁנוּ, וְהִנְחִילֵם  
אֵלֵינוּ יְשׁוּעָה וְעֹטֶרֶת נִצְחוֹן  
תְּעַטְרֵם, וְנִתַּת שְׁלוֹם בְּאֶרֶץ  
וְשִׁמְחַת עוֹלָם לְיוֹשְׁבֶיהָ. וְאֵת  
אֲחִינוּ כָּל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, פְּקֹד-נָא  
בְּכָל אֲרָצוֹת פְּזוּרֵיהֶם, וְתוֹלִיכֵם  
מִהֲרָה קוֹמְמִיז לְצִיּוֹן עִירְךָ  
וְלִירוּשָׁלַיִם מִשְׁכַּן שְׁמֶךָ, כְּפָתוּב  
בְּתוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה עֲבָדְךָ: אִם יִהְיֶה  
נִדְחָךְ בְּקִצֵּה הַשָּׁמַיִם, מִשֶּׁם  
יִקְבְּצֶךָ ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ וּמִשֶּׁם יִקְחֶךָ:  
וְהִבְיָאֵךְ ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶל הָאֶרֶץ  
אֲשֶׁר-יְרָשׁוּ אֲבֹתֶיךָ וִירְשֶׁתָּהּ,  
וְהִיטִבְךָ וְהִרְבֶּךָ מֵאַבְתְּיָה: וַיַּחַד  
לְכַבְּנוּ לְאַהֲבָה וּלְיִרְאָה אֶת שְׁמֶךָ,  
וְלִשְׁמֹר אֶת כָּל דְּבָרֵי תוֹרָתְךָ,  
וּשְׁלַח לָנוּ מִהֲרָה בֶּן-דָּוִד מְשִׁיחַ  
צְדִיקָךָ, לְפָדוֹת מַחְכֵּי קֶץ יְשׁוּעָתְךָ.  
הוֹפֵעַ בַּהֲדָר גָּאוֹן עֶזְךָ עַל כָּל  
יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵּבֵל אֶרֶץְךָ, וְאָמַר כָּל אִשָּׁר  
נִשְׁמָה בְּאֶפֶס: ה' אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל  
מְלֶךְ וּמְלִכּוֹתוֹ בְּכָל מְשָׁלָה, אָמֵן  
סְלָה.